



THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR

Journal of American Philatelic Society Writers Unit #30

On the Web: www.wu30.org

Fourth Quarter 2007

Planning Digital References and Studies

Organizing and indexing philatelic information makes it readily available.

By Francis Adams

Part II

Part one of this series, Francis Adams' CREATING DIGITAL REFERENCES AND STUDIES appeared in the second quarter issue of THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR. A third article — A BASIC FORMATTING GUIDE FOR DIGITAL PHILATELIC STUDIES — will appear in the first quarter issue of TPC in 2008.

Once a collector turns to exhibiting, the requirement to increase one's philatelic knowledge expands exponentially, typically as a result of the need to display that knowledge to further an award level. Accumulating reference material is not the goal of the exercise. The materials must be organized, indexed, and readily available to support your information needs.

Accessibility of information is the most important element and electronic media is one way to make your knowledge requirements quickly available. Digital references can be invaluable information organization tools, especially if they're portable and cross platform. Once assembled, digital information can also be published for public consumption in the forms of printed matter, slide shows, Web sites, digital philatelic studies (DPS) or references.

As a matter of clarification, the term *digital philatelic study* is defined as an electronic presentation on a narrowly selected philatelic subject, much like a detailed article. A *digital philatelic reference* (DPR) is a wider, more comprehensive body of information on a subject presented with more of an encyclopedic treatment in that it contains more tangential information on the subject. Either type of work can be distributed on compact disc or through the Internet.

Building a DPS or reference requires planning, organization, a logical structure and personal effort. Hopefully, the following information will benefit interested readers as it contains steps I've found valuable in producing such electronic philatelic presentations.

Defining the Project Scope

In 1999, I began with the idea that an electronic philatelic exhibit would be valuable if I could integrate additional information. Thereafter, imagining how comprehensive it could be and what types of data it might include produced a goal of a full-bodied reference machine. As with most labors of love, my visions were

greater than my expertise. I was forced to confront unforeseen obstacles but continued as this was something I really felt would be both interesting and useful.

That early digital exhibit has since grown into the proportions originally envisioned and become a DPR rather than a 16-page exhibit with a bit of support material. I've since promised myself that for future projects, I would be more thoughtful in regard to my personal ambitions.

You may be thinking the challenge of building a digital reference is too great a task. If that's true — you've successfully constructed a self-defeating wall — start with individual tasks to achieve the end goal. You'll be surprised how fast a simple thing grows in the world of digital philately.

Perhaps you also believe you're unable to do this alone. There are plenty of other collectors interested in sharing information and expertise. Find someone with similar interests whom you admire and would like to work with. Ask if they might be willing to join forces and produce a joint work. If there's more than only one person, that's fine. Joint projects can mesh individual knowledge and talents into a greater whole. (Finally, a use for those techie guys...)

Let's lower your wall and begin with a few simple components for a DPS that could evolve into a DPR sometime in the future. You'll need a goal and a dream that result in the vision and persistence to realize the goal.

The Goal

The first step is defining your goal by answering three questions.

1. Why are you producing the DPS?

Examples: Personal benefit, benefit of others or simply for fun

2. What will your DPS be used for?

Examples: Information distribution, a pocket reference or a competitive literature entry

3. What are you not willing to compromise in your DPS?

Examples: Quality of information, production timeline or document size

The Dream

This part can be the most fun and picking your subject carefully will allow you to build your study with less effort. Focus on building a clear-cut DPS; your readers will thank you for it.

Continued on Page 16



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Recruiting: Lloyd de Vries
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USPS representative: Peter D. Martin
Web: John Cropper
Webmaster: Andrew McFarlane
WU #30 Breakfast: Steven J. Rod

Albert W. Starkweather Editor's Domain



If You Volunteer, Be Prepared To Work

Those who volunteer for *mission critical* duties, such as serving as an editor, columnist, or writer, should be prepared not only to work, but also to meet deadlines, to fulfill the organization's needs, and to be responsive to the readers. In other words, they should have a work ethic.

Engendering this rant is the tragicomic story of a regional philatelic organization with national membership that has been unable to publish its biannual journal on a regular basis for more than two years and currently is four issues behind schedule. Only one issue has been published since March 2005, that being the September 2005 journal which was not mailed until June of this year.

This can be blamed on a series of *misses* — miscues, mishaps, misinformation, and miscommunication, as well as an unresponsive editor and society officers who seemingly were unwilling or unable to take the steps to correct a rapidly deteriorating situation.

The downward spiral began when a new editor volunteered to do the job in-house. He was an expert in the society's specialty, but woefully inexperienced in print production. The organization discontinued having a trade school produce approximately 200 copies of its 40–52-page journal by DocuTech™, claiming its deliveries often were late.

It purchased a low-end color laser printer for the editor's use. This decision apparently was made without consideration of the editor's ability to perform the task or of the true cost of consumables to keep the printer running, nor were alternative production methods explored.

Had the new editor admitted at the beginning that he was overwhelmed by the task, steps could have been taken to avert the impending disaster. He could also have asked for help, delegated chores with which he was uncomfortable or lacked the time to perform. The problem was exacerbated when outside pressures began exerting themselves on the editor. The president of the society and its other officers were aware of the rapidly deteriorating situation and slipping deadlines; some volunteered to help but were turned down by the editor.

Unfortunately, the relationship between the editor and society president became confrontational as the former made promises that were not kept. The editor claimed that as a volunteer he did not have to meet the same standards as someone doing work for hire.

The society is now seeking a new editor. Sadly, the society may have lost members who did not renew memberships or failed to attract new members because of the lack of a publication.



Peter Martin *My Message*

Come to Breakfast

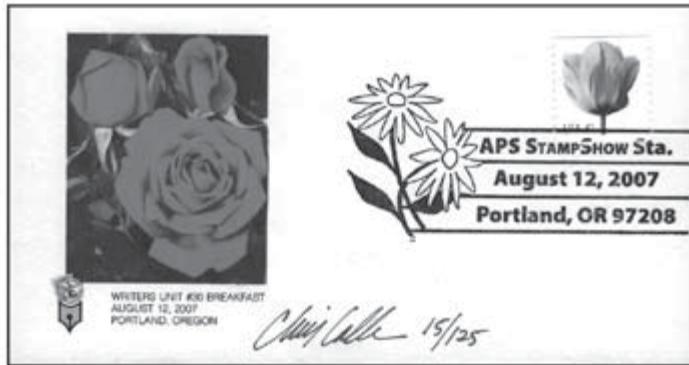
The traditional *AMERISTAMP EXPO* Sunday Writer's Unit #30 breakfast will be held in Charlotte, NC on January 13, 2008 at 8:30 a.m. U.S. Postal Service Historian Meg Ausman will be the featured speaker. Her talk will be, *Sources to Help You Research Postal History*. I hope to see you all there!

Our Last Breakfast at StampShow

The APS Writers Unit #30 StampShow breakfast on August 12 in Portland, OR was another success with nearly 65 in attendance. The number was impressive considering the many members who had to catch early flights back to the east coast.

David A. Kent and the late Varro E. Tyler were inducted into the Writers' Hall of Fame. David Straight spoke about *Will Your Website Outlive You?* He pointed out the need for an archive of Web sites and for a philatelic registry index of sites to assist researchers. The *STAMP SHOW* Literature Grand award went to Joseph J. Geraci. The list of literature award recipients appears on page 14.

In an added touch, Chris Calle, a noted stamp designer who lives in Connecticut, prepared a special event cachet for a cover



SRS Issuing New State Revenue Catalogue

The State Revenue Society will release its first up-to-date state revenue catalogue in almost 50 years, according to its president, Peter D. Martin.

Nearly four years in development, the *SRS State Revenue Stamps Catalog* is the first to include coverage of issues from 1857–2005, excluding municipal and fish and game issues. Scott Troutman, who also edits the SRS journal, edited it. The extensively illustrated catalogue consists of more than 700 pages and provides coverage for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. It also includes the first major listings of state revenue tags. Values are provided in dollars.

The catalogue will mail in early December. Retail price is \$60 for the three-hole punched edition and \$65 for the spiral bound

that was given as a gift to all attendees. Covers left over from the event will be used as fundraisers.

New officers were installed and the meeting marked the retirement of Council member Ronald E. Lesher who had been responsible for setting up the winter and summer breakfasts, including scheduling speakers and obtaining the ever-popular door prizes. My thanks to Ron for his exceptional contributions. Editor Albert W. Starkweather was the only new name on the Council roster as all other officers and council members were incumbents. Steven J. Rod will take over Lesher's breakfast duties.

The WU #30 Board met prior to the breakfast. Highlights from the meeting and from the reports provided at the breakfast include:

- The organization continues to be in strong shape and has been very active.
- WU #30 is considering a new program to encourage and recognize philatelic writers in a variety of writing categories.
- A membership drive will be conducted in 2008 in a push to increase WU #30 membership among authors and editors.
- Our Web site (www.wu30.org) continues to draw praise and will continue to be upgraded including a plan that calls for taking membership applications online and accepting PayPal.
- We are working with the USPS and Canada Post to have all current members of WU #30 to be placed on their mailing list for stamp-related announcements.
- We are examining the addition of color for *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR*.
- Work continues on the WU #30 style guide.
- The Writers Unit Hall of Fame committee has established written guidelines.
- The WU elections were completed with a near record turnout.

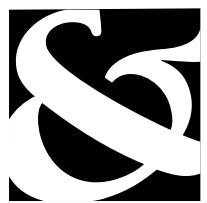
The USPS Rate Increase

The 2007 U.S. Postal Service rate increases have had a dramatic effect on small circulation publications such as *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR*. Overseas rates are particularly hard hit. Secretary-treasurer George B. Griffenhagen did a thorough analysis of the impact and we will hold the line this year. With another Postal Service increase expected next year (and annually thereafter) there is a good chance that we may have to increase dues next year to cover these costs. The situation will be reviewed at the *STAMP SHOW 2009* board meeting in Hartford, CT.

version. Prepublication price is \$45 for punched and \$50 for spiral bound. Shipping within the U.S. is \$6 per catalogue. Dealer inquiries for orders of five or more copies are invited. The three-hole punched edition, which fits any standard three-ring binder (not included), is recommended for collectors who want to include updates that will be published in the *State Revenue News*.

Prepublication orders must be received by November 15. Checks payable to the State Revenue Society should be sent to SRS Treasurer Harold Effner Jr., 27 Pine St., Lincroft, NJ 07738.

Membership in the State Revenue Society is only \$15 per year, and includes four quarterly issues of *State Revenue News*, members-only auctions, and lots more. For details, contact SRS Secretary Kent Gray, Box 67842, Albuquerque, NM 87193; e-mail: KENT@STATEREVS.COM.



Communicator Articles Needed!

THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR is in dire need of articles and interesting filler items. Quite simply: We are running on empty. President Peter D. Martin vastly understated the need at the Writers Unit breakfast in August. There currently is no need for more book reviews. Reviewers should notify me of their plans so that duplicated and wasted efforts may be avoided.

— Albert W. Starkweather, Editor

Typo Gremlins

The third quarter TPC had several notable typos, including *contract* instead of *contact* in the page 1 caption and *Petersons* instead of *Peterson* under Short Takes.

PHLNDX Update

PHLNDX update 84, sent to the APRL at the end of September, has provided it with more than 225,000 database entries. Acquisition of publication runs from 1937–1938 has allowed the project to mine this period heavily. Most of our prewar period material is in English, meaning French and German publications remain to be explored. Update 85 is underway with a target completion date of Dec 31. We plan to add another 5,000 entries. I anticipate more use of the Collectors Club library in New York for European publications.

— Gene Fricks

Web Site Competition Revisited

FIP evaluation of Web sites is still alive, if not “well.” The demise of this activity was predicted based on the complexity of the task and the rapid growth of new sites. (“Viewpoint: Web Sites as Literature,” THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR, Third Quarter 2006, page 10.)

As reported in the minutes of the FIP Literature Commission meeting in Malaga, Spain, on October 12, the judging of sites continued at the *ESPAÑA '06* exhibition where 12 sites were entered. The magnitude of the effort is revealed in the awarding of a large vermeil to a site that had 65,000 images and more than 2,600 pages. The conclusion was to update FIP’s Special Regulations for the Evaluation of Revenue Exhibits and Guidelines for this activity and to continue with judging web sites.

— Alan Warren

Boehret Award for *The Posthorn*

The Posthorn, journal of the Scandinavian Collectors Club, has been awarded the Dianne Boehret Award for the Best Periodical in North America for 2006–2007, by the Award Committee of the American Philatelic Congress. Paul Albright of Boulder, CO is *The Posthorn*’s editor.

The journal joins the ranks of the *Postal History Journal*, *Collectors Club Philatelist*, and others in being recognized as an outstanding publication.

— Stephen D. Schumann

Elizabeth C. Pope, 81, Renowned Philatelist, Dies

Elizabeth Callis Pope, 81, who rose to become one of the leading professional philatelists, died in St. Louis, MO, on October 11 after suffering a brain hemorrhage.



Born and raised on a Depression-era farm in western Tennessee, Ms. Pope discovered stamp collecting at the age of 11 and never lost her fascination with philately. She often told audiences: “Beginning to collect stamps was more significant in my life than being confirmed in the church, or losing my virginity.”

In the male-dominated stamp-collecting world, Ms. Pope first established herself as an accomplished collector and organizational leader in the

1940s. She became the first woman president of the Tulsa Stamp Club 60 years ago. In 1954 she published a scholarly study of Spain’s first postage stamp in the *American Philatelic Congress Book*.

Ms. Pope’s first marriage ended in divorce. She met her second husband, John D. Pope III, at a stamp club meeting in Oklahoma. They married in 1952 and lived in St. Louis, where Ms. Pope became the driving force behind the Webster Groves Stamp Club, creating one of the most successful local groups in the country.

Trading stamps with collectors eventually turned to dealing, and Ms. Pope established a wide network of contacts as she attended worldwide stamp exhibitions with her husband. After the couple divorced in 1980, she was recruited by London-based stamp auctioneer Robson Lowe, to help establish a stamp department in New York City at the art auction house Christie’s, which had recently acquired Lowe’s company. The opening of Christie’s stamp department in 1981 marked the beginning of Ms. Pope’s 26-year career as a stamp auction industry executive.

From 1981 to 2007, Ms. Pope helped secure many of the most valuable stamp properties to come to auction. When the American Bank Note Company sold its archive of stamp and banknote proofs and design materials in 1988, it chose Christie’s after Ms. Pope convinced the company’s executives that her team was the most qualified to handle the sales. The entire ABNC archive ultimately realized more than \$20 million. Ms. Pope left Christie’s in 1994 to join Siegel Auction Galleries, another New York City stamp auction firm.

In addition to Ms. Pope’s professional activities, she served on the boards and advisory committees of several leading organizations, including The Philatelic Foundation, the National Postal Museum, and the American Stamp Dealers Association. She was a past ASDA president and received its *Woman of the Year Award in 2001*.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Salvation Army, 1130 Hampton Ave., St. Louis, MO 63139; or American Diabetes Association, 10820 Sunset Office Drive, St. Louis, MO 63127.



Steven J. Rod *Rod of History*

Recalling 40 Years of Philatelic Writing

I am happy to introduce my first quarterly column which will provide an historical perspective of the last four decades of philatelic writing as reflected in the pages of our own publications, as well as what was reported in the philatelic press during that time.

When President Peter Martin asked me to be the first APS Writers Unit #30 Historian, he did so knowing that I happen to own a very complete run of the *NEWSLETTER* and *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR*. From its earliest mimeographed days to the amazing Starkweather era, our publication has recorded 40 years of the progress made in the area of philatelic writing by philatelic writers. I would be remiss if I didn't state at the outset that the American Philatelic Society has but one true historian, our dear friend Herb Trenchard. I have learned a great deal from Herb, and I invite him to help us reminisce and learn more about WU #30.



David Lidman

1967, whose co-chairs were Gerry Neufeld and Sid Schneider.

Lidman, our first chair from 1967–1969, was America's greatest philatelic writer and editor. He wrote philatelic newspaper columns nearly all of his adult life. He also wrote many philatelic books, especially general market books on the pleasures of stamp collecting. In 1971, we presented him with our very first medal in recognition "of his many years of outstanding service to philately."

Jim Chemi was a preëminent philatelic writer and editor, and a leader of Arizona's philatelic community. He was a part-time editor of *The American Philatelist* from 1960 to 1965, and became its first full-time editor in 1965. He remained as editor of the *AP* until his death in 1976.

Cited in his APS Hall of Fame posting is the fact that Chemi

was one of the *Committee of Five* who led the APS effort to put the notorious forger Raoul Ch. De Thuin out of business. He was editor-in-chief of the book, *The Yucatan Affair* (1974, reprint 1980) about their successful effort.

Cratsenberg served the APS in many positions, including president from 1957–1961. During that time the APS made the important move of centralizing controls over its many functions to State College, PA. He was also a member of the *Committee of Five*.

Our very first formal publication was a six-page mimeographed "news bulletin" labeled Volume 1, Number 1 — Winter 1968. The front page article talked about how we passed the 100-member mark in less than six months. "To reach the century mark in less than six-months is an outstanding achievement for any new organization of a specialty nature. The growth of Unit No. 30 is a clear indication that a need has long existed within our national society for a live-wire organization devoted exclusively to problems and needs of philatelic writers, editors and columnists."

So we have problems ... good to know that is part of the record. I like the emphasis on live-wire. When I first joined the WU in the late 1980s, we were renowned for many of our *live wire* activities. Throughout my four columns in 2008, I will share with you this aspect of our history, and perhaps you might be inspired to step forth and call President Martin and say, "Hey, I can do that!" for the WU30 in 2008.

Of very special historical interest is how the first Writers Unit breakfast came into being. It can be traced to the following invitation from Secretary Cratsenberg:

We sincerely hope that we will see as many of you as possible at the '68 Spring meeting in San Diego, and the Writers Unit meeting will be held on Sunday morning, March 31, at 9 a.m. It will start with breakfast, so plan to attend and let's break bread together.

So, ladies and gentlemen, our great tradition of 40 years started with the invitation to our second formal gathering, where as an incidental occurrence breakfast was served! I love finding and sharing these unique moments in time!

Reading about our history has motivated me to find out whom among our readers/members are our oldest (active) members. I would love to hear from you if you believe you were on our rolls since sometime in the early 1970s. Write to me at SJROD@AOL.COM and tell me what you remember and we can share it with the entire membership. My first quarter 2008 column will be devoted to the *Broken-Pen Award*, so if any of you have any memories of that, please let me hear from you by the December 20th. While I will make every effort to report our history accurately, I love the quote "History is the version of past events that people have decided to agree upon." 

Steven J. Rod's philatelic literature credits include being a Lifetime Patron Member of the American Philatelic Research Library and former contributing editor of PHILATELIC LITERATURE REVIEW. He was co-editor with Rodney A. Juell of the ENCYCLOPEDIA OF UNITED STATES STAMPS AND STAMP COLLECTING published by the United States Stamp Society. Rod also authored the now out-of-print book, INTRODUCTION TO STAMP COLLECTING, published by LINN'S STAMP NEWS.

ATA Prints Handbooks In-House

Printing (almost) on demand saves printing and warehousing expenses.

By Ray E. Cartier / ATA Executive Director



Cartier

The American Topical Association has been printing handbooks on topical philatelic subjects since 1951. The first handbook was *Americana on Stamps* by Ellen E. Jensen and *Biology Philately* by Homer L. Jones. Both topics were incorporated into one 22-page handbook that sold for \$1. It was printed by Quiz Graphic Arts, which still prints the ATA bimonthly journal, *Topical Time*.

All of the ATA handbooks were small enough to be saddle stitched until 1984, with the exception of the 1979 handbook, *Plants on Stamps*, which had a comb binding. However, when *Birds on Stamps* was issued in 1984, its 252 pages required perfect binding.

As more and more topical stamps were issued, the handbooks became thicker. Until the 1990s almost all books had to be sent out to printers, typeset and run with minimum quantities of 2,000 or 2,500. The format of each was 6 x 9 inches, which was best for printing on a 36-inch press. This changed with the advent of on-demand printing via computers tied to digital copiers.

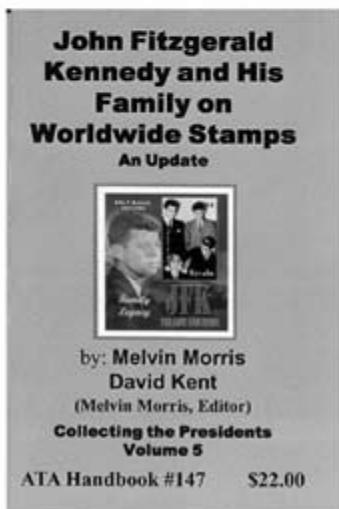
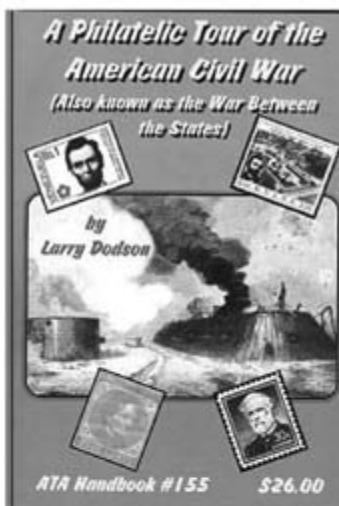
But the ATA handbooks continued to be printed outside until the turn of the century. In 2001 two new handbooks, *Masonic Philately* and *Speliophilately* (Caves on Stamps), were printed in an 8 1/2 x 11-inch format with comb binding and broke the mold of having to be printed at a printing house.

My wife and I took over the ATA Central Office in early 2003. My business background had included 14 years in inventory control management, 25 years in procurement, and a three-year stint of operating my own print and copy shop after a massive layoff by my employer. When we received two trailers containing approximately 17 tons of handbooks, at our new Texas location, my inventory control background reaction, if audible, would have sounded akin to fingernails on a blackboard.

One of my first changes to the Central Office process was to purchase both a used digital black and white copier and a digital color copier, networked to the computers in my office, my wife's office and to a separate computer close to the machines. Print-on-demand had come about during my short stint in the industry and it was easy to see we did not have a 2,000-person market for each of our titles.

The format had to change from 6 x 9 inches to 8 1/2 x 5 1/2 inches (8 1/2 x 11 half folded) to accommodate the use of standard 60-pound paper. The objections were not strong and we went forward with that. However, this meant that we were going to have to lay out the lengthy handbooks in a software program such as PageMaker, where pages 1 and 200, for example, are printed on one side of a sheet while pages 2 and 199 were printed on the other. Neither my wife nor I had a background in any such program.

However, my son, Michael, who learned PageMaker when he worked in my print and copy shop, he has been doing the page



layouts since we took on the ATA Central Office. This knowledge also allowed him to place stamp images within the pages where they were appropriate. Michael also likes designing the covers and has done a great job for us.

Inserting pages with color is a manual job. They must be printed separately on the digital color printer and inserted by hand. This task is significantly more difficult to do with 100 percent accuracy than anyone who has never done this would believe. The first part-time person we hired, who was experienced, caused us to lose more than 60 printed books out of our first run of 100. My daughter, Colette, who had done this at our shop for all three years, was available and we brought her in to handle the copying and collating. Her work has been flawless.

Cutting, trimming, and cover printing were beyond our capabilities. When books are assembled, the pages must be cut exactly in half and once the oversized heavy covers are wrapped around the pages, the entire book must be glued and trimmed. That job was outsourced to a local printer. Our first run is normally now 100 to 150. If we sell out, a second run is made. De-

pending on the length of time it took to sell the first run, the second quantity can vary from 50 to 200, thus keeping our inventory consistently low.

My wife found a book wholesaler who was interested in purchasing our excess inventory. We sold him about 17,000 handbooks, keeping no more than 500 of any title in stock. With that sale, we could move our inventory into a smaller storage area, thus saving \$800 a year that was added to the price we received for the books that we had on hand. When we had to pay property taxes this year for our end-of-year inventory, it was half of what we formerly paid.

The cost of carrying inventory is called a K-cost. This incorporates the money that is tied up and not invested for interest — taxes, warehouse space, and time spent in handling and doing inventory. I estimated it to be 25 percent *per year* of the original costs of the handbooks. That means that for every four years we kept handbooks, we paid for them a second time. This did not take into account the cost of moving the books from state to state through the years as new executive directors moved the Central Office to their own locales.

About the time we were selling the excess, Alan Smith, a past professor of business at UCLA and a consultant, offered to look over the operation of our office at no cost. The only difference we had with his assessment of our entire office operation is that he assessed the K-cost at 27 percent.

There are a few books in which the format is such that an 8 ½ × 11-inch format with plastic comb binding seems to work best. For that reason we have published *Bears on Stamps* and *John James Audubon on Stamps* in that size. In those cases, the entire work is done in our small office.

Our books continue to be much thicker. Recently, *Insects on Stamps of the World*, Vol. 3 was published with 464 pages. This book is the maximum size that can be perfect bound and we are now looking at having to print our next handbook, *Women on Stamps*, Vol. IV, in two separate books. We do not allow our authors to print information that is contained within previous works on the same topic, in the newer volumes. One reason is that the previous handbooks in inventory would become worthless. The other reason is that the books in many cases would be much too large to print in-house as is the case with the upcoming *Women on Stamps IV* handbook.

Also, we have placed another caveat on new handbooks: They must be more than simply a bound checklist of stamps on any given subject. The handbooks must give information about the subject itself so that it adds to the knowledge of the reader. A perfect example of this is our recent *A Philatelic Tour of the American Civil War*, which is full of information on the battles, people on either side of the conflict, and transportation used during the conflict.

Handbooks play a major role in the American Topical Association's value to collectors in providing information to make this expression of philately, fun, educational and creative. ☺

To contact the ATA write to P. O. Box 57, Arlington, TX 76004-0057; or call 817-274-1181 between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. central time. You may also contact them at AMERICANTOPICAL@MSN.COM. Web site is WWW.AMERICANTOPICALASSN.ORG.

Charlotte, North Carolina



APS AMERISTAMP EXPO JANUARY 11–13, 2008 CHARLOTTE CONVENTION CENTER

**Attention! All Philatelic Writers —
and any friends you may have!**
*Please join us for the 72nd**

Writers Unit Breakfast

at Ameristamp Expo 2008

8:30 a.m. January 13

Holiday Inn Charlotte Center City

Tickets \$21 until December 15 & \$25 Thereafter

**Speaker: Meg Ausman
USPS Historian**

Sources to Help You Research Postal History

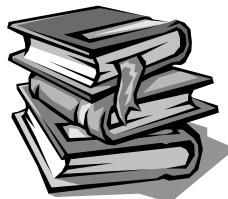
- 90 minutes of Fraternity, Networking & Learning
- Door prizes — philatelic literature & other goodies
- Special USPS-Philatelic Writers Contest, with great prizes, in honor of Ausman's presence

Meg Ausman ...

was appointed USPS Historian by Postmaster General Anthony M. Frank in January 1991.

The historian is responsible for the USPS' historical artifacts, Postmaster Finder — the system that tracks the names of postmasters by post office, publications of the USPS: *An American History, 1775–2006*, and *Sources of Historical Information on Post Offices, Postal Employees, Mail Routes, and Mail Contractors*, and the information in the postal history section at WWW.USPS.COM.

* Stay Tuned — we are researching the accuracy of this number



Reviews Print and Electronic

Books & Catalogues

Exploring the Liberty Series

The Liberty Series by Ken Lawrence, C. David Eeles, and Anthony S. Wawrukiewicz. 268 pages, 6 x 9 inches, perfect bound. ©2007 American Philatelic Society. \$60 (\$48 for APS members) from APS, 100 Match Factory Place, Bellefonte, PA 16823-1367.

Since I first heard the that a book on the Liberty series was in the works I have eagerly awaited its publication. Reading Anthony Wawrukiewicz' previous massive compilations on international and U.S. postal rates piqued and fostered my interest in odd and unique modern postal history about 10 years ago. Thus I was elated to find he was co-authoring the Liberty Series volume with Lawrence and Eeles.

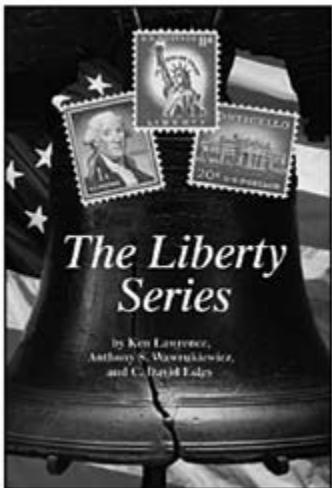
At first glance the 262-page book looks outstanding. It is profusely illustrated with more than 480 color illustrations and 21 black and white images. The book is printed on a high quality thick glossy stock and can easily be tucked in a briefcase for quick reference.

Lawrence's chapters begin with an introduction to collecting the series, a history of the individual stamps, coils, covers, the future of the series, and reference materials. Lawrence also authored several sidebars within the other chapters on tagging, offbeat three-cent covers, rating covers, and four-cent international reply postal cards. Eeles' chapters include in depth reference information on the three-cent Statue of Liberty coils, three-cent Statue of Liberty stamps and postal cards varieties, and dummy and test material. Wawrukiewicz' chapters focus on his specialty, rate changes, and usages of the series on domestic and international mail.

A comprehensive index concludes the book, which also contains an extensive color-coded chart of three-cent rates and multiples from 1954-1971 and a chart of selected domestic and international rates from 1954 to March 1974 showing the minimum rates for each category.

Lawrence begins the volume with:

More than half a century ago the Liberty series of stamps and postal stationery ushered in the modern era of United States stamp production. No set of U.S. stamps before or since has brought so many innovations in such a short period of time, or has departed from traditional methods of stamp design and production in so many respects.



And later states:

The Liberty series served for a longer span of time than any other series of definitive stamps in U.S. history, covering a dozen first-class domestic letter rate periods.

The opening chapters go into great detail on wet/dry printing, vending machine stamps, paper and gum, tagging and luminescence, precancels, dry-intaglio printing, and the genesis of the series.

Eeles' chapters go into great detail discussing paper with optical brighteners, gum varieties, breaker bars, ink, tagging, damaged plates, small and large size coils, and perforations. He has clearly done extensive research on the three-cent stamp and his expertise is evident. He concisely explains the various aspects of study with just the right mix of information and specifics, without scaring off a novice in the area. Even experts will likely learn something here; the depth of illustrated examples is impressive.

If you've read any philatelic magazine in the past few years you've likely heard of the rare tagged three-cent coil variety used by Look magazine in 1967. You might not yet have heard of Liberty dummy test stamps, or uprated international message reply cards. The chapter on modern mail processing discusses the development of cancels beginning with hand cancels, and progressing to Leavitt, and Barry machines, Burroughs sorters, tagging and manual sorting of mail, zip-code standardization, and optical character readers. The short treatise explains the development and expansion of post offices moving from hand cancels to machines that sort 40,000 of pieces of mail a day.

As a cover lover, my favorite chapter was that specifically focused on covers bearing different rates and usages. Some of the most fascinating examples were a registered Liberty tag used to ship gold from Alaska, a single \$1 usage paying a 20 ounce letter rate in 1963, several examples damaged by fire or plane crashes, and a second class rate newspaper mailed in 1963 with a four-cent Lincoln stamp paying a postage due fee.

It is noted that all of the Liberty series up to the \$1 stamp exist in precancel format. One wonders how many precancel rates/stamps can be found on cover. In-depth examples of certified, registered, third class, special delivery, and international Liberty covers are also included. There is also a great little section on identifying wet and dry printed Liberty stamps on cover using cancellation dates.

This tremendous concise volume will no doubt inspire and challenge others to collect and document more examples of Liberty usages, and also serves as a pristine example of specialized philatelic study and collaboration. One would hope that other modern postal history specialists would take note of this format and use it as a model for other series. Will the Americana series or the Prominent Americans be next? I truly hope this volume inspires more lovers of modern postal history to preserve and save stamps on covers rather than soaking them off. Anyone who has tried to find the 50 state greetings stamps, used correctly on cover could likely tell you that they are much scarcer and harder to find than finding a Scott No. 1 on cover.

This volume is a fabulous addition to any philatelic reference library. No postal history collector can afford to overlook this publication, especially a lover of modern mail.

— Heather Sweeting

Levy Scout Catalogue Updated

Levy's Boy & Girl Scout Cachet Covers of the United States 1910-1960, volumes I & II, second edition, by Jay L. Rogers. 254 pages, 8½ × 10¾ inches, perfect bound, ©2007 Scouts on Stamps Society International, Hendersonville NC. ISBN 978-0-9796338-0-5, \$29.95 plus shipping from SOSSI, c/o Lawrence Clay, P. O. Box 6228, Kennewick WA 99336.

Sheldon Levy's original Boy Scout catalogue was published more than 50 years ago and followed by two unillustrated checklists of additional cachets and then Girl Scout covers. This new edition includes all that material plus many more cached first day and event covers as well as cached council corner cards. The two volumes are bound into one book —Volume I covers 1910–1956, and Volume II covers 1957–1960.

This is a priced catalog reflecting current market values. Each cached envelope is illustrated a little greater than half actual size, so that cachet details can be seen. Covers that are purposely excluded from the catalogue include add-on cachets, one-of-a-kind items, United Nations, fakes, personal stationery, and similar material.

The Levy numbering system was revised to include year dates in the numbers. For example 19-1 is the Boy Scout Week event cachet for 1919. Each entry includes the retail value of the cover, a name assigned to the cover (in this case Boy Scout Week — 1919), place and date of cancellation, method of printing and cachet col-

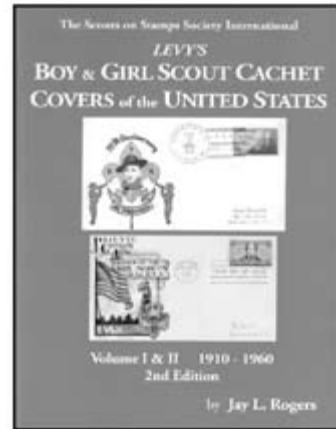
or, the sponsor when known, and notes on stuffer contents or labels on the cover.

There are a number of sidebar discussions that amplify on one or a group of covers, and these appear throughout the book. Extensive first day cachet listings are shown for the 1948 Juliette Low stamp, the 1950 Boy Scouts of America issue, the 50th anniversary BSA stamp of 1960, and the Canal Zone Boy Scouts stamp of 1960.

Event covers include jamborees, SOSSI conventions, council and troop events, and WW II patriotics among others.

Not to be overlooked are special sections on slogan and pictorial cancels, and labels issued for scouting. Appendices include a glossary of terms, tables showing the earlier edition catalog numbers with the new ones, Levy numbers and their counterparts in the Mellone / Planty catalogs, and a checklist for collectors to track their holdings. A few pages of late additions and an index complete the book. For the U. S. scout topicalist, this catalog is a prime reference.

— Alan Warren



U.S. Post Offices Final Volume Released

United States Post Offices Volume VIII — The Southeast, compiled by Richard W. Helbock. 224 pages, 5.5 × 8.5 inches, illustrated, softbound. ©2007 La Posta Publications, Scappoose, OR. \$27.50 plus \$5 shipping from James E. Lee, P. O. Box 36, Cary, IL 60013.

The final installment in Bill Helbock's post office series marks the conclusion of a remarkable project that has significantly influenced the postal history field.

He mostly has achieved his objective "to produce a complete listing of all independent U.S. post offices in a format that was consistent and easy to use. ... to offer a guide to the relative scarcity of the most common postmarks from each office." The eight volumes include listings for more than 166,000 offices. Each region includes a brief history describing its settlement, postal history, and bibliographic references. This volume, covering Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina, was left for last, according to Helbock:

Volume 8 was the most time consuming [as] no one had ever published a complete listing of the post offices of Alabama and Georgia, and it was necessary for me to resort to the basic primary resource that underlies all these independent U.S. post office listings—the manuscript Records of Appointments of Postmasters. ... It was necessary to work through the seven rolls of National Archive microfilm and treat myself to a crash course on the historical geography of Alabama and Georgia.

As with past volumes, *The Southeast* includes an interesting chapter about post office development in the area covered and includes early maps and lists offices going back to Colonial days.

The organization of Volume 8 follows that of the others in the series with introductory remarks followed by a detailed explanation of the elements and format used in the listings and a selected

bibliography. The main portion of the book consists of an alphabetical listing of the region's post offices with the county, state and years of operation plus a scarcity index. Only independent post offices are listed. Contract or classified branches, stations or community post offices are not included.

The modern county maps are very helpful. The only quibble I have is the number of typos.

The scarcity index, with values of 0 (common) to 9 (rarest) is intended to be a guide. Post offices that are still in operation are assigned an S/I of 0 because to obtain a representative sample of that post office's postmark should be easy. In weighting the rarity and demand factors to arrive at a market value, Helbock relied heavily on the research and sales expertise of Nevada postal history dealer Jim Forte. Readers interested in a more complete description of Helbock's scarcity index should read the "Publishers' Page" in the September 2007 *La Posta*.

Helbock says updates and new editions are possible, because: *Since the series began in 1998 I have received reports of omitted post offices, misspellings, and some other errors. Beyond those, there is the whole question of scarcity index numbers for individual offices and the broader question of market values to which they relate. Most of the reports I have received, however, concern named branches and stations that often appear in postmarks but were never considered within the scope of this project. A volume — or two — covering the named branches and stations would be a useful addition to the body of knowledge.*

The entire USPO series is an essential starting point for any postal historian and Volume 8 is a critical addition that is highly recommended.

— Peter Martin

Briefly Noted

Aerofilia Italiana: Catalogo Storico Descritto 1898–1941 (Italian Aerophilately / Described Historical Catalogue), second edition, by Fiorenzo Longhi. 630 pages, A4 format, hardcover. ©2007 Fiorenzo Longhi. €100 (U.S. \$140) plus postage of €10–15 to Europe, depending on the country of destination, or €25 (U.S. \$35) via surface to U.S. and Asia from Longhi, Via alla Masseria 12, I-28832 Belgirate (VB), Italy; fax +39 0322 292712; LONGHIF@TIN.IT

This is the second edition of the catalogue, which covers all aspects of Italian aerophilately. It starts out by describing and showing early balloon documents and cards from as early as 1898. The next section covers early pioneer aircraft flights, air meets, demonstration flights, etc. Then comes the first official airmail service in Italy, which started in 1917. The rest of the catalogue describes and shows all known first and special flights within Italy and from Italy to other countries until 1941. There is even a section listing all known Italian newspapers that have been carried by air.

Many of the covers and documents are shown in color. The amount of detail in the catalogue is amazing, and it has been considerably expanded from the first edition. It is in Italian, but users with an Italian dictionary should be able to understand the listings fairly easily. The catalogue comes with a pricing supplement, which values all documents and covers in euros.

— Ken Sanford

Faroe Islands Meter Marks 1943–2006, compiled by Steen Jack Petersen. 40 pages, 6 × 8½ inches, saddle stitched, stiff covers, ©2006 Forlaget Skilling/Daka, Copenhagen, Denmark. ISBN 87-91-93201-7, \$12 plus postage from Jay Smith & Associates, P. O. Box 650, Snow Camp, NC 27349.

The author, who has collected Faroe meter markings for 30 years, has divided his catalogue into two major eras — the Danish period before 1976 and the Faroe period from 1976 on.

A number of the marks are illustrated. The tables list the meter manufacturer, meter number, advertising slogan, user's name, town, period of use, and a value in Danish kroner.

The Danish period tables are for the Hasler, Francotype, Frama, Krag, Neopost, Pitney-Bowes, Satas Eksport, and Postalia machines. For the Faroe Islands postal independence period the same meter manufacturers are listed with two additional sections — post office meter mark boxes and post office meter marks.



This handy priced catalogue will help beginners to get started and provide information for the advanced collector who is seeking completion.

— Alan Warren

Lapidarstemplerne by Jan Benthix. 216 pages, 6 × 8½ inches, perfect bound, stiff covers, in Danish. Copenhagen, ©2007 Forlaget Skilling/Daka. ISBN 87-91932-03-3, \$54.50 plus postage from Jay Smith & Associates, P. O. Box 650, Snow Camp, NC 27349.

Denmark's 19th century Lapidar cancels were essentially circle die stamps, sometimes duplexed with numeral cancels, and typically bearing the town and month and day, but not the year. The term *Lapidar* refers to the typeface of the lettering. Other types of markings are antique and gothic. There are 19 major types that are illustrated at the front of this catalogue. The listings are alphabetical by town name. Each entry shows the cancel type, earliest and latest known use, and the catalogue value of a cancelled stamp, with a supplement if on piece.

Although the listings are in Danish, the illustrations and data and values are easily understood. There are only a couple of explanatory text pages that are also in Danish. All of the cancels are nicely shown in black and white, and many examples of entire covers in color appear throughout the catalogue. Following the main catalogue are special listings of the many Lapidar cancels of Copenhagen, and those used for railway markings.

— Alan Warren

Fodder for Editorial Writers

CONSUMERAFFAIRS.COM is a Web site dedicated to consumer complaints, reports, recalls, and questions regarding a vast number of topics and items. A specific section is devoted to the USPS and its services. WWW.CONSUMERAFFAIRS.COM/DELIVERY/US_POSTAL_SERVICE.HTM

The site contains a vast number of postings, queries, and complaints about delivery, requirements, and services. Some should be taken with a grain of salt, but others bring up legitimate — if not thought provoking — subjects in regards to USPS policies.

Subheadings include wrong mail, lost mail, no mail delivery, address disputes, change of address, priority, and express. One example states: "I sent a letter to the mayor of Tully (NY), I used the Village Offices' street address. I found the letter, the next week, in my PO Box with a sticker that said *undeliverable, no mail receptacle*. Instead of putting it in the Village's PO Box they took the time to put the sticker on it and put it in my PO Box. This has been an ongoing problem in Tully and we're not the only ones with this complaint!"

A similar site, **MY3CENTS.COM** also contains postings by individuals with postal problems. WWW.MY3CENTS.COM/SEARCH.CGI?CRITERIA=UNITED+STATES+POSTAL+SERVICE

— Heather Sweeting

Electronic Media

Wikipedia Philately Projects

January 15 will mark seven years since entrepreneur Jimmy Wales launched the English-language Wikipedia, described as a “free encyclopedia that anyone can edit.” Wales originally founded Nupedia, an online, public-domain encyclopedia that strove for “a quality comparable to that of professional encyclopedias.” Editors were required to hold a Ph.D. and be *accomplished scholars*.¹ Frustrated by obtaining only 24 articles in three years, Wales debuted Wikipedia as an auxiliary *feeder* site. The idea was for the public to create drafts which professional editors would fact-check, polish, and publish on Nupedia. More than 40,000 articles were created in the first 18 months. Unable to keep up, professional editing was abandoned and Nupedia disappeared by September 2003.² Wikipedia has since become the ninth most-often consulted Web site in the world.³

Although *stamp collecting* and *philately* articles appeared on Wikipedia by fall 2001, content grew slowly until 2003 when specialty articles began to appear; among the first were *plate number coils*, *postal stationery*, and *first day covers*. An explosion followed, due in part to the WikiProject Philately. Today there are several hundred articles on the site. This review assesses two collaborations aimed at improving quality and organization.

WikiProject Philately

[HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/WIKIPEDIA:WIKIPROJECT_PHILATELY](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Philately)

More than 200 entries are *stubs*,⁴ defined as “an article containing only a few sentences of text which is too short to provide encyclopedic coverage of a subject.”⁵ Longer pieces are often uneven in quality, even on basic subjects.

To remedy the situation, several philatelists banded together circa 2003 in WikiProject Philately, a collaborative effort to improve the general quality of philatelic writing on Wikipedia. They do this by identifying topics that need an initial author and creating to-do lists of existing articles needing revision or illustration. To give philately greater visibility, they began picking an article and concentrate on developing it until it is a candidate for *featured article* status.

The project is meeting with some success. The first philatelic article chosen as a feature by Wikipedia was *Postage Stamps of Ireland* on August 14. Featured articles are linked directly from Wikipedia’s home page for one day after being chosen as one of the site’s best articles after a review by its editors. According to the site, only one in 1,240 articles on the site has attained this status.⁶ The WikiProject has identified *postal history* and *aerophilately* as the next two entries to be groomed for featured status. Postal history is making progress, but no new edits to aerophilately have been made in more than six months.

There are still many issues for the volunteer editors to address, one of the most important being encouraging responsible use of copyrighted text and images. On visiting the entry for *Postage Stamps and Postal History of Vatican City*, I found large chunks of text that I wrote for the Vatican Philatelic Society’s Web site copied and pasted without a footnote or other credit.⁷ One member of the philately WikiProject includes on his to-do list the cryptic entry “APS philatelist bios,” which hopefully does not portend wholesale cutting-and-pasting from the APS Hall of Fame Web site.



Images are even more problematic. For example, a number of contributors take the position that any image of a U.S. stamp printed before 1978 is public domain because the stamps are federal government works. This is generally true, but applies only to the stamp itself and not necessarily to images of it. The difference becomes important where images of well-known and individually identifiable subjects are involved, such as the unique one-cent Z-grill belonging to the New York Public Library’s Benjamin K. Miller collection. The library also owns images created of it. Images of the inverted Jenny, which has been plated to the extent that each copy is singly identifiable, could lead owners of the individual position to claim they also own the rights to images of their particular copy. Others might be able to use them by claiming fair use, but this is very different from asserting they are public domain.⁸

WikiPortal Philately

[HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/PORTAL:PHILATELY](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Philately)

The idea behind Portals, which debuted in early 2005, is to provide a convenient entry point into articles about related subjects. Its function is a sort of index to these articles, which the user would otherwise have to find via a search engine, through a hyperlink embedded in another article, or by browsing through *categories*. The problem with the category approach is that Wikipedia contains thousands of them listed alphabetically, so hunting and pecking for the philatelic ones is a chore.

Portals were introduced to the English-language Wikipedia site in early 2005, and the philately Wikiportal was among the very earliest. It was established on April 3, 2005 by Adrian Mastronardi. Among Mastronardi’s other online activities is the Digital Philatelic Literature Project, a collaboration with Project Gutenberg to digitize public domain philatelic monographs and place them online.⁹ Mastronardi appears to have stopped maintaining the site in about July 2006, but the orphaned portal was adopted by Karl Winkelmann, a philatelist who maintains Web

sites for the Éire Philatelic Association as well as several specialist societies in military and censored mail.¹⁰

The WikiPortal has sections labeled *New Articles* and *Expanded Articles* designed to provide convenient links to the most recent content. Someone needs to add the links to these sections manually, as it is not automatically populated. The result is that many new and expanded philatelic entries probably don't actually show up there. There is also a "Stamp of the Month" feature, but this appears not to have been changed since about June 2007, when the Hawaiian Missionaries were selected.

Conclusions

The challenges of maintaining standards in an open source project such as Wikipedia are multifold, as has been shown by several recent scandals involving inaccurate information posted to the site. The two philatelic projects are attempting to keep Wikipedia's philatelic nose clean with much success. However, the online encyclopedia's philatelic content is neither broad nor deep, and its policy against including original research in articles means that for the foreseeable future, hard copy publications and society journals will remain the best source for comprehensive philatelic knowledge.

— Daniel A. Piazza

All World Wide Web sites listed in these references were accessed on October 17, 2007.

Texas Postal History Journal CD-ROM

Texas Postal History Society Journal Index of Volumes 1 through 31 / Images of all issues — Volumes 1 through 31 / 1975–2006, compiled by Richard H. Byrne, Mike Ludeman, and Lyle Boardman. CD-ROM. ©2007 Texas Postal History Society. \$25 postpaid for members and \$43 for non-members, which includes a one-year membership in TPHS and journal subscription. Order from Lyle Boardman, 3916 Wyldwood, Austin, TX 78739-3005; LCBOARDMAN@AOL.COM.

From the title it might be assumed that this is primarily an index, but nothing could be farther from the truth. However, the extensive index in both Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat (PDF) formats, makes the disk much more user friendly. 80-page document is divided into a subject index (63 pages) and an author index (17 pages), and also lists all the journal editors. One wishes that the entries were hyperlinked to the specific articles, although this would be a labor-intensive project. Page format is 8½ × 11-inches.

Except for the Word index and two maps, all the data is provided in PDF, which allows users to easily print out pages for hard copy reference. The disk includes a Texas counties map, an 1836 state map, and a 1900 railroad map, the two latter maps being in image formats that require users to have a graphics viewer or editor. In addition to the index, maps, and individual issues, there are also listings of the Dr. William H. P. Emery Awards for Texas postal history exhibits and society rosters for 2005 and 2006.

The core of the project is a complete set of journals. Here is where the divide between the journals of yesteryear and the journals of today — not merely the Texas journal, but all journals — becomes readily apparent. The first 29 volumes of the Texas Post-

- ¹ *Nupedia*, [HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/NUPEDIA](http://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/NUPEDIA)
- ² *History of Wikipedia*, [HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/HISTORY_OF_WIKIPEDIA](http://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/HISTORY_OF_WIKIPEDIA)
- ³ Exceeded by Yahoo!, Facebook, Google, and YouTube, among others. See Alexa Internet Web traffic statistics, WWW.ALEXA.COM/DATA/DETAILS/TRAFFIC_DETAILS?URL=WIKIPEDIA.ORG
- ⁴ *Category: Post and Philately Stubs*, [HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/CATEGORY:POST_AND_PHILATELY_STUBS](http://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/CATEGORY:POST_AND_PHILATELY_STUBS)
- ⁵ *Wikipedia: Stub*, [HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/WIKIPEDIA_STUB](http://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/WIKIPEDIA_STUB)
- ⁶ *Wikipedia: Featured Articles*, [HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/WIKIPEDIA:FEATURED_ARTICLES](http://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/WIKIPEDIA:FEATURED_ARTICLES)
- ⁷ [HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/POSTAGE_STAMPS_AND_POSTAL_HISTORY_OF_VATICAN_CITY](http://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/POSTAGE_STAMPS_AND_POSTAL_HISTORY_OF_VATICAN_CITY). The most egregious plagiarism is the entire paragraph that begins: "Much, but by no means all ..."
- ⁸ The library's Z-Grill is displayed at [HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/Z_GRILL](http://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/Z_GRILL), while the National Postal Museum's Inverted Jenny is shown at [HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/INVERTED_JENNY](http://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/INVERTED_JENNY). Clicking on either image brings up the following tag, appended by the user who uploaded the image: "This image of a postage stamp has been released into the public domain by the copyright holder, its copyright has expired, or it is ineligible for copyright. This applies worldwide."
- ⁹ [HTTP://TPDLP.BLOGSPOT.COM](http://TPDLP.BLOGSPOT.COM)
- ¹⁰ [HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/USER:WW2CENSOR](http://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/USER:WW2CENSOR)

al History Society Journal were typed and photocopied. Beginning with Volume 30, it has been printed in color in magazine format by TPHS member Norman Cohen of Dallas. The current editor, Tom Koch, has done a wonderful job of transitioning the publication from a bland black and white (read: gray) journal to a color format that is equally suitable for print or online presentation.

The biggest drawback of the pre-color issues is that they are merely images of the pages in PDF format, meaning they are not searchable. It is possible to create a composite PDF document with searchable text embedded beneath the page image, but this is also labor intensive. Volumes 30 and 31 are true PDF files, meaning they are fully searchable. There is limited linking, mostly for e-mail addresses and some Web sites — a function built into the PDF creator. However, page jumps and references to other issues are not.

This project should encourage other publications to follow suit. When pages are generated for the printer, it is an easy task to create a high-resolution PDF for future use, including delivery on CD-ROM. It is the only nearly bulletproof method of archiving files that are not subject to the vagaries of software and hardware developers, where what works today may not work tomorrow.

It is hoped that the Texas society will offer annual or biennial updates to this disk.



— Albert W. Starkweather

Journals & Newsletters

The Airpost Journal in Color

Published monthly by the American Airmail Society. 44 pages, 5½ × 8½ inches, saddle stitched. Editor Wayne L. Youngblood, P. O. Box 111, Scandinavia, WI 54977-0111; YOUNGBLOOD@TDS.NET; WWW.AMERICANAIRMAILSOCIETY.ORG.

The *Airpost Journal* changed editors at the end of 2006, with Wayne Youngblood taking over for James W. Graue. Youngblood quickly transformed the journal to all color and overhauled the content of the journal without sacrificing size. The journal retains its trademark size.

Youngblood's transition as new editor was seamless. He quickly laid down his ground rules that limit the type of content and seek to preserve the quality of information that any editor strives to attain. He has published letters that both praise and criticize the changes he has made. The flow of articles has been uninterrupted. One major change has been a sharp increase in advertising rates, with a separate structure for color and black and white.

The reader quickly notices the balance shifting away from content heavy with zeppelin material and first flights to collateral items related to aerophilately. The emphasis is now expanded to other areas of philately that were once taboo in past issues. Surely the vast area of aerophilately can compensate for a lack of zeppelin articles with airmail articles.

One recent article that made a connection to another area of collecting was John Hotchner's excellent article on mourning

covers that traveled by airmail. The message received that these covers are sometimes passed over because collectors do not recognize the rarity of such markings. Hotchner provides numerous examples of covers from different eras and foreign usages.

What could be more exciting than publishing a first flight find? Robert E. Mattingly details the cover with his argument and conclusion that it is the first piece of privately prepared mail by an American commercial aircraft from Africa to the United States. Mattingly used sources to support his argument.

The *Airpost Journal*'s transition to full color and a new editor was seamless and represents a new beginning. The journal exhibits strong features and seems to span the wide area of aerophilately. Hopefully Youngblood can keep the *Airpost Journal* on this straight path.

— Alfred Carroccia



Japanese Philately

Published bimonthly by the International Society for Japanese Philately, Inc. 58 pages, 8½ × 11 inches, saddle stitched. Editor Robert M. Spaulding, 421 W. Fifth Ave., Stillwater, OK 74074; ISJP@ISJP.ORG; WWW.ISJP.ORG.

Japanese philately is an overlooked area not because it is unpopular, but rather by its perception as an overly specialized area. One reason may be the intimidating Japanese alphabet or perhaps it is forgeries, which are abundant and difficult to identify. Compounding this are the prefecture issues by the different Japanese states, a separate collecting interest in and of itself.

Thankfully, *Japanese Philately* is a journal that tackles these somewhat confusing areas and presents them in articles and short narratives that are coherent and balanced, equally informative to both the beginner and the specialist.

Editor Robert M. Spaulding does a splendid job pulling together a variety of interesting topics and presenting them in a format that does not drag the reader from one part of the journal to another part in order to finish an article. Black and white illustrations are crisp and clean and articles are profusely illustrated with tables, maps, and line drawings.

The cover of each issue contains a black and white illustration that often is enhanced when accompanied by illustrations of postmarks and stamps, particularly if the picture is non-philatelic. Ironically the index is on the back cover, divided into subject area with a correction sheet for errors in past issues.

The December 2006 issue included a detailed specialized article on the varieties of roman-letter comb hand stamps used in the Chinese settlement of Changchun. This article, by Charles A. L. Sweason, sets out in detail the 16 different varieties with illustrations and rankings according to rarity.

A brief article reviewed the ISJP specialized catalogue, titled Nisan, and reproduced its table of contents. This catalogue is an important reference for the Japanese philatelist and an important companion to the journal.



— Alfred Carroccia

Material for reviews may be sent to the editor. Reviews are also welcomed from others. Reviews should be concise and stress those aspects that are helpful examples (positive or negative) for other authors, editors, and publishers. Review requests from those having an interest in the item, such as publishers and distributors, must include a copy of the publication.



STAMPSHOW Literature Palmares — Portland, Oregon

Grand and Gold

Annotated Cumulative Subject Index to The Chronicle of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues, Journal of the US. Philatelic Classics Society for Issue Numbers 1 through 200, Joseph J. Geraci

Reserve Grand and Gold

The Penny Post, Larry Lyons
The Postage Stamps of New Zealand Volume IX, Royal Philatelic Society of New Zealand, Inc.

Articles and Columns

Gold

Articles in the *EFO Collector*, Joseph Monteiro

Catalogues

Gold

Cornwall: Its Postal History and Postmarks, Christopher R. Riding
Revenue Stamps of Iran, 2nd Edition, Sasan Baharaeen & Gordon Brooks

Vermeil

2007 Brookman Price Guide for U.S. Stamps, Canada Stamps, First Day Covers, Autographs and Postal Collectibles, Arlene Dunn

Bronze

A Comprehensive and Specialized Catalogue of the Exporta Issues of Mexico, John R. Endsley, Jr.

Hors Concours

Catálogo Especializado De Sellos De España Tomos I-IV (2006), Edifil, S.A.

Catálogo Unificado De España y Dependencias Postales, Edifil, S.A.
Catálogo Especializado De Los Enteros Postales De España y Colonias, Ángel Laiz

Complete Catalogue of Italian Stamps, Sassone

Old Italian States "The Stamps", Sassone

Handbooks and Special Studies

Gold

Congress Book 2006, Ken Trettin

Cumulative Index to Japanese Philately Volumes 1–60 (1946–2005), Ron Casey

The Revenue Stamps of Norway and Related Non-Fiscal Issues, Bjorn Kristian Wang

United States Patriotic Envelopes of World War II, Lawrence Sherman

U.S. Postal Card Catalog, Lewis E. Bussey

Vermeil

Bulgaria from the Ottoman Empire to the Kingdom; History, Stamps and Postal History 1840–1908, Vaccari Srl

Captain James Cook The Explorer: An Historical & Philatelic Review, Barry Floyd

The Collection Emil Capellaro Kingdom of Lombardo Venetia, Vaccari Srl

Fakes Forgeries Experts, Knud Mohr

From the Azores to New Zealand, Patrick Maselis

Greeting Postal History of the Selective Service and the Draft 1917–1976, Russ W. Carter

Handbook of the Postal Cards of the World's Columbian Exposition, Kenneth C. Wukesch

Major Canadian Postage Stamp Errors of the Queen Elizabeth II Era (1953–2006), Joseph Monteiro

Persiphila — Iran Classic Philatelic Reference — Volume 1 — Qajar Dynasty, Mehrdad Sadri

The Turbulent Decade: Georgia's Post Offices 1860–1869, Francis J. Crown, Jr.

"We Build—We Fight" Locations and Assignments of United States Naval Forces Construction, Norm Gruenzner, Military Postal History Society

Silver

Forgery Guides — Postage Stamps of Russia — 1917–1923, Dr. Ray Ceresa

John Paul II — Visits of Hope. World Stamps Witness the Travels of Pope Wojtyla, Vaccari Srl

Lions of Iran — 5th Edition 2006, Mehrdad Sadri

Malta Zeppelin Mail, Dr. A. Bonnici

Silver Bronze

Harlan W Miller, Philatelic Printer, Harlan L. Miller

Mail Censorship and Postal History 1935–48, Peter M. Jangaard

Hors Concours

Champions of the World — the Stamps Issued by the Organizing and Winner Countries of Football World Championships 1930–2006, Vaccari Srl

Italian Numeral Cancellations 1866–1889, Vaccari Srl

Le Occupazioni Britanniche Delle Colonie Italiane 1941–1950, Sassone

Postal Relations of Italy in 1800s Italy - Switzerland, Vaccari Srl

Vaccari Catalogue 2006–2007 — Postage Stamps and Postal History. Historical Study and Catalogue with Valuations, Vaccari Srl

Periodicals

Vermeil

The American Revenuer, 2006 (Volume 60), Ken Trettin

First Days, Peter Martin

German Postal Specialist, James W. Graue

The Israel Philatelist, Donald A. Chafetz

Military Postal History Society Bulletin, David A. Kent

PHSC Journal, Justus Knierim

Postal History Journal, De Blois & Harris

The Posthorn, Paul Albright

TELL, George Struble

The United States Specialist, Leonard Piszkiewicz

Vorläufer, Journal of the German Colonies Collectors Group, John Kevin Doyle

Silver

British Caribbean Philatelic Journal, Everett Parker

The Canadian Connection, Volume 20, John G. Peebles

The Cinderella Philatelist, Peter Rogers



Scene at the Breakfast

President Peter D. Martin, top, addresses the Writers Unit #30 breakfast at STAMPSHOW 2007 on August 12. Inductee David A. Kent is presented with his Writers Unit #30 Hall of Fame certificate by Martin, above. David L. Straight, above middle, spoke on *Will Your Website Outlive You?* APS Historian Herbert Trenchard, above right, listens intently. Also attending the breakfast were Ronald E. Lesher, right, and Alan Warren, far right.

Ada M. Prill & Robert P. Odenweller photos
Forerunners, Peter Thy
India Post, Peter Leevers
Journal of Chinese Philately, John Barefoot
Menelik's Journal, Ulf J. Lindahl & Ethiopian Philatelic Society
Postal Himal, Richard M. Hanchett
Stamping Around, Peter Elias
Texas Postal History Society Journal, Tom Koch
Silver Bronze
Duck Tracks, Rita Dumaine
Joint Stamp Issues, Pascal LeBlond

The Oregon Country — Postal History Journal, Alan Patera
Philatelici-Graphics, Bruce L. Johnson
Reflections, Don Neal
Upland Goose, Journal of the Falkland Islands Philatelic Study Group, Bill Featherstone
Bronze
JAPOS Bulletin, Clete Delvaux
Hors Concours
R.F. Revista De Filatelia, 2006/2007, Edifil, S.A.
Journal of China Philately (Vol. I), David You Lu

Digital Planning — Continued from Cover

Unless you're a seasoned veteran, don't start with the *History of the Egyptian Mail Systems* or *Life on Earth*.

Pick a more modest and manageable subject, such as the *Earliest Recorded Pharaonic Letter on Watermarked Papyrus* or *Piltdown Man*. In both cases, we're talking about limited items.

The Plan

Documenting your plan is a little more difficult than thinking about it — not from a technical point of view, but difficult from a motivational point of view. Many of us are lazy to some degree, believing we can remember everything we envision and later sadly realizing we're not further along with the project for lack of this discipline.

So, how do you document your plan? I suggest using a small notebook. Make legible and coherent notes in it as you daydream your project together. Don't worry about the sequence or completeness of your ideas at this point. The main thing is to write down your thoughts and ideas — you will sort it all out later.

Take a week. Think about the study you want to do for only one hour per day that week and write down ideas as they come along. One hour — then detach yourself. Doing such a time sensitive exercise will keep your mind fresh for that important hour. No fiddling with your notes and remember the most important point — no idea is too dumb — just write, write, write. Limit this phase to seven days as you'll get nearly 90 percent of your ideas during this time. The longer the period, the less productive it is nearer the end.

A DPS is not a digital exhibit. Open your thoughts process and allow yourself freedom to include ideas, information or materials not normally seen in a paper-based exhibit limited to 16 pages per frame. Now is not the time to be shy.

Notes may include philatelic material, run-of-the-mill points normally presented for the area, as well as more offbeat items such as: artwork and illustrations (printing presses, etc.), information from references, entire articles related to the subject (with permission of the authors), tidbits of knowledge from a friend, one or two colors associated with the subject, ideas on how you wish to present your creation, a theory you have or a question that needs an answer. This last one can get you further than you might believe.

Organization

After a successful week of note taking, let's organize your dream. You do not have to, nor should you, immediately execute every minute detail you've written down. Review your notes and pick out perhaps four or five main ideas and list them in an outline fashion. You should end up with a list of ideas that describe your chosen study in general terms that seem to flow from beginning to end. That's your storyline.

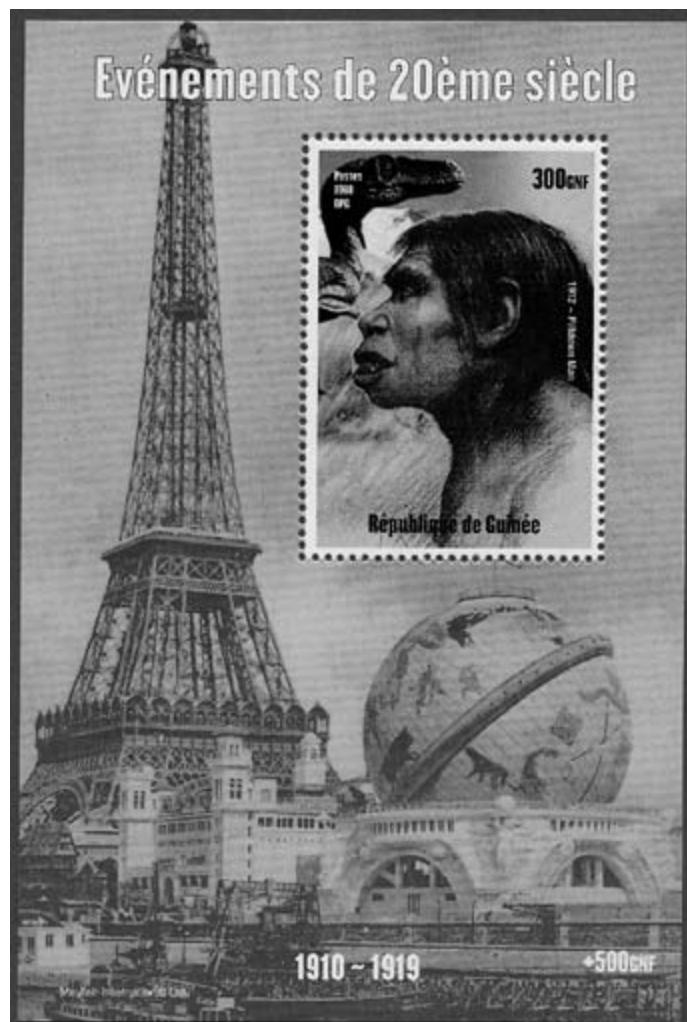
Build this outline at a high level as it covers the entire study. A valuable tool in evaluating which general ideas should be included is to ask "Why?" Why is this idea so important it should be one of the four? Can it be combined with another into a more general category? Occasionally, you might wish to include a particularly good idea, but it just doesn't seem to fit anywhere. Put it aside. Over time, the place for that idea will become evident, and it can be worked into the fabric of the study with less effort. This is a work in progress.

This initial planning exercise has resulted in a draft outline of your storyline. The remaining notes concerning colors, style, etc. will be used in our next steps, so keep them handy. We now build a four-level pyramid that incorporates your outline, materials, knowledge, labor and perspective. You may construct a pyramid with fewer or more levels — this exercise will use four.

A four-level pyramid (see figure on facing page) is the basic digital study structure and should remain flexible enough to accommodate the addition of items at each level. As you add content or points of interest, you will find your overall storyline **will** change, so don't lock yourself into a specific concept. Watch for opportunities to expand each level with new points of interest, material, and knowledge. (Remember those ideas that didn't fit before?) This is a dynamic process and it will become more refined as it is implemented.

Level 1 — Splash (Title) Page

The *splash* page of the study is at the apex of the pyramid, the main entry point for the study. A splash page is exactly that — you want to make a memorable first impression. A good first impression utilizes a clean design where the subject is immediately recognizable. You do not have to incorporate the latest technological innovations to make it a good experience.



A single stamp and souvenir sheet depict Piltdown man.

The judicious use of graphics, a prominent title, perhaps a subtitle as well as the purpose and objective of the study is what we're aiming for. At the bottom of the page, include a footer area with a copyright notice and a version number or revision date. More information could be added, but the goal is to keep it simple and attractive. The viewer should look at the splash page and be intrigued enough to want to see what follows.

What comes next? Digging into the pyramid structure.

Level 2 — Introduction and Table of Contents

A more complete introduction than is found on the splash page is an important item on my personal list. This is the answer to the title page teaser and should make viewers hungry for the remaining pages by giving them the complete storyline in short-form. That's not to say your entire story should appear on this page, but a detailed overview of the study is appropriate.

Some exhibitors may not agree with this view, but keep in mind that this is not a philatelic exhibit. It's a digital study and therefore needs more depth than can be afforded in the exhibit frame simply because it presents depth in the subject and is not restricted by physical boundaries.

A table of contents or index is important in the study and you may have both. I personally like both as it increases the viewer's ability to find information quickly. A table of contents consisting of bullet points and a few words describing each bullet point is informative and short. It can be constructed by selecting several of the ordered ideas from your notebook exercise. Produce the bullet points by synthesizing each main idea into a word or two, essentially section headings. An index can be included in Level 4.

Level 3 — Philatelic Content

The main philatelic content should follow the introduction and table of contents. Go directly to the substance of the study and give the viewer what they came to see. What, besides stamps, should you include in your study?

It depends on the type of study, but in general, these are philatelic items you own or aspire to. You can scan your materials and ask if owners of other materials might also provide you with scans. Everyone enjoys having their efforts recognized, so ensuring that owners are recognized as study contributors is key to obtaining cooperation. **Do not renege on your part of the deal!** If anything, give them more credit than they're due ...

My digital reference includes all types of philatelic materials, exhibit pages, checklists, maps, illustrations, descriptive texts, historical documents, postal regulations, etc. Anything you deem ap-

propriate can be used as this is your dream, just remain aware of copyright restrictions.

Be comprehensive by including materials directly associated with the subject. It's a good practice as it strengthens the study. Correctly and logically arrange the material and allow the focus pieces on a page to shine by not overcrowding them.

A catalogue type study is a reasonable place to start and may actually help you in the beginning. As you develop however, keep your focus! Don't allow *scope creep* to expand your initial idea beyond your goal, diluting your project so it's only a *Jumble of Stuff on the Subject of ...* When in doubt, leave it out (or consider including it in level 4 as appropriate).

Level 4 — Supporting Information

Below the main philatelic material content is the supporting information section. Support information consists of items such as philatelic articles on the subject, historical and social background information, book and magazine references, a glossary of terms used, short biographies of important people or information on institutions associated with the subject, a bibliography, author credits, contact information, awards won, internet links, administrative information including *legal beagle* notices and a help page explaining how to use the study. The list goes on and on depending on your study's intended purpose.

You've read references watched slide shows and listened to experts and collectors present their knowledge during seminars at meetings and shows. You've formed a library of books, magazine and newspaper clippings, photocopies and notes. How much time did you spend digging out those references? How difficult was it to find them once

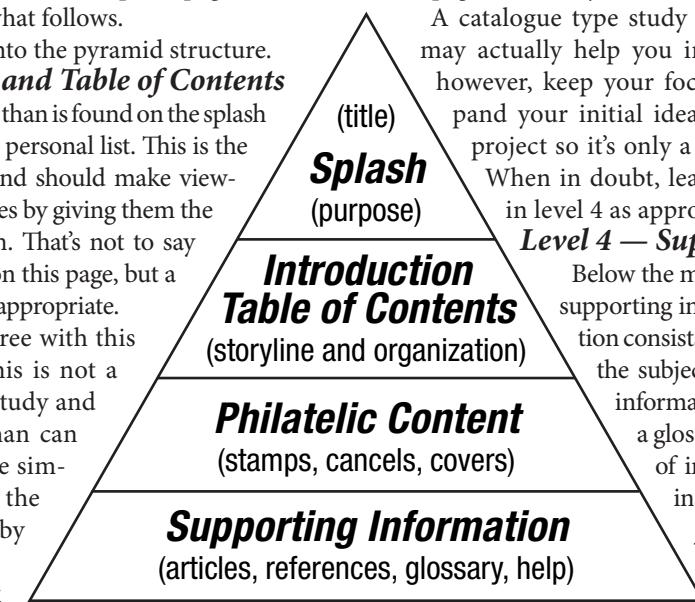
you knew they existed? How long does it take to find that little nugget of information you need right **now** in that library?

Including references in your digital study provides solid bedrock for it. Future specialists in your field will appreciate your efforts even if they don't know you. After all, we're only caretakers of this material and improving the state of the art is a duty as well as a joy in our hobby.

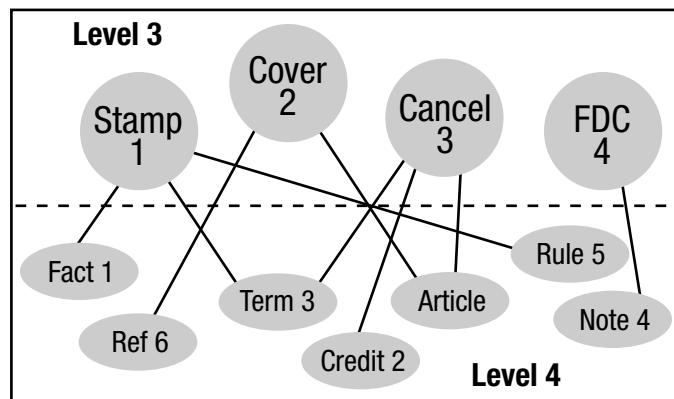
Doing It Your Way

Perspective is your unique spin on your little piece of the wide, wide world of philately. It's how you arrange your material and knowledge into the final presentation using a fresh angle only you can create. It's the realization of the dream, so stay as true to the dream as possible and you'll be satisfied with the result.

Continued on Page 18



Four level pyramid structure (sample materials for each level)



Level 3 (philatelic items) and Level 4 (support information)
sample relationships

Digital Planning — Continued from Page 17

If you're doing this for the judges, and these days, digital philatelic studies are gaining a standing of their own, maybe you pay attention to the rules of philatelic literature judging on the APS Web site (STAMPS.ORG/DIRECTORIES/DIR_LIT/LITJUDGING.PDF). Additional resources for a DPS are the Mega-Event Digital Philatelic Study rules (WWW.ASDAONLINE.COM/INDEX.PHP?ID=65), and *Creating Digital References and Studies* (*THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR*, Second Quarter 2007).

For the most part however, this is your personal creative exercise. Now is your chance. Organize your study in your fashion and get things done right!

Effort

A project will absorb as many hours as you're willing to put into it. If you're like me, time gets away from you and before you know it — geez is it time for dinner already? I now limit my sittings at the computer screen in terms of minutes and my eyes thank me for it. (I cheat a little as I don't limit the number of times I can sit there each day.) There are no rules that say I have to be on the computer every day, so I can build the study as suits me time wise.

That said, you'll likely put a reasonable amount of time into building your new study. At first it may appear to be an unending task and essentially, it could be, depending on what you wish to achieve — study or full blown philatelic reference. As I said earlier, choose your goal carefully so a useful result is possible. Any basic study can always be expanded by adding new discoveries to its content and depth to the support information making it ever more comprehensive.

Conclusion

The real payoff is in the organization of your data. You'll gain immediate access to the information, without looking through a book-

shelf, and as you continue adding, the smaller bits of data won't get lost. The effort will shine most brightly when you perform a search for a key word and let the document do the work for you.

A second and perhaps more personally beneficial payday occurs when someone you don't know sees your study and contacts you with information you've either been unsuccessful in finding or didn't know about. Sharing information is now possible with less effort than ever before. Digital documents are very portable and quite easily transmitted anywhere in the world via a quick e-mail message or posting to a Web site.

How about sharing your information source with your friends, local club, specialty society, or even at a national convention as a public presentation? Helping others expand their knowledge is an honorable goal and perhaps a kindred heart may be found to boot.

The latest development on the DPS front is promotion of the medium at the ASDA Mega-Event in New York City (WWW.ASDAONLINE.COM). Participating in a competition may be an option for your newly minted study.

As you've read this far, you've completed a portion of the planning process discussed above. In the next article,

we'll discuss developing a 'formatting guide' in preparation for producing a DPS, so grab that notebook and start writing down those ideas.

Thanks

My sincere thanks to Alan Campbell and Richard Maisel for their continuing support in reviewing drafts of these articles.

About the Author

Francis Adams, a member of WU30, is a collector and exhibitor learning how to combine the hobby of philately and computer technology to produce digital exhibits and literature references for his interest areas (WWW.BONEANDSTONE.COM).

Expert Help for Writers, Editors

Two notable members of Writers Unit #30 are offering expert help for writers and editors.

Barth Healey, a senior staff editor at the *New York Times*, will review society journals and other publications, providing constructive comments.

Send two or three recent issues to him at 220 Montauk Hwy., Apt. 16, P. O. Box 277, Speonk NY 11972-0277. Please supply return postage.

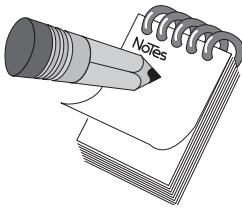
Past president Charles J. Peterson offers free critiques for periodicals and books / manuscripts. Submit the four most recent issues. Include postage equivalent to four times the first class mailing fee. Any unused amount will be returned. Critiques can be expected in about 30 days.

Inquire before sending books and manuscripts, providing a brief description. Return time will vary, depending on length and other commitments. Include a SASE.

Send your materials to Peterson at P. O. Box 5559, Laurel, MD 20226. His phone is 301-776-9822; e-mail CJP7777@AOL.COM.



Philatelic items, background text and support graphic



Secretary-Treasurer's *Report*

As of October 20, 2007

New Members

- 1944** Edward F. Fisher, 1033 Putney St, Birmingham, MI 48009.
Webmaster: Peninsular State Philatelic Society; Assistant Editor:
Peninsular Philatelist. Sponsor: George Griffenhagen.
- 1945** L. Steve Edmondson, P. O. Box 871, Shelton, WA 98584. Author: *Tennessee Machines* (self-published); Editor: *Tennessee Posts* (Tennessee Postal History Society). Sponsor: George Griffenhagen.
- 1946** Hal Vogel, 19 Neptune Lane, Willingboro, NJ 08046-1321. Associate Editor: *Ice Cap News* (American Society of Polar Philatelists); Author: polar philately monographs. Spnsor: Alan Warren.
- 1947** Ralph A. Weil, 998 North Hill Lane, Cincinnati, OH 45224-1241. Editor: *China Clipper* (China Stamp Society); Author: various booklets for Michael Rogers. Sponsor: Michael Rogers.

About Writers Unit #30

The purpose of the Writers Unit #30 of the American Philatelic Society is to encourage and assist philatelic communication, knowledge, and comradeship. Membership is open to any philatelic writer, columnist, editor, or publisher — and anyone interested in philatelic communication.

Join Us Today

Join Writers Unit #30 now and begin reaping the benefits of membership, including your subscription to *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR*. Applications received before October 1 will be recorded as members for that calendar year and these members will receive all issues of *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR* for the calendar year. Applications received on or after October 1 will be recorded as members for the following calendar year.

An application may be downloaded at www.wu30.org.

Membership Dues

USPS ZIP Code Addresses.....	\$15.00
Canada and Mexico	\$17.50
All Other Addresses.....	\$20.00

Payment must be made in U.S. funds by a check imprinted with a U.S. bank transit number, or by postal money order, payable to *APS Writers Unit #30*. Some overseas members prefer to send U.S. bank notes by certified mail.

Updating Your Mailing Address

Please notify us of address changes to assure that you receive each issue of *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR* without delay. This will also save WU #30 more than \$1.00 because the USPS charges 70 cents when they have to send us an address correction, and we still have to pay the postage for reshipping the issue to the member.

*George B. Griffenhagen, WU #30 Secretary-Treasurer
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